



Google answers questions at Amsterdam District town hall, but some issues remain unresolved

Matt de Simone

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Google representatives addressed questions from Amsterdam District residents about the proposed Greenfield data center campus during a town hall Thursday, discussing water use, construction, cooling, environmental permitting, electrical infrastructure and other concerns.

The town hall was limited to Amsterdam District residents because of the venue's capacity, according to Botetourt County. County Communications Manager Brent Watts said Supervisor Tim Snyder had announced the restriction on Facebook before the meeting and that it included members of the media.

Snyder said the decision was made to prioritize space for residents of the district, where the proposed data center would be located.

"The purpose of this town hall was to give residents of the Amsterdam District an opportunity to ask questions and hear directly about the Google Data Center project, which is located in their district," Snyder said. "The venue had limited capacity, so the decision was made to prioritize space for Amsterdam District residents."

Watts said the meeting quickly shifted from a planned presentation to a question-and-answer session.

"Honestly, they got through about three slides and it turned into a Q and A session," Watts said.

The county has since published an indexed Q&A from the meeting containing 85 questions organized into 11 topics. The questions are identified as answered, partially answered with follow-up promised, not answered, or disputed by residents.

See **Town Hall**, page 11



FILE PHOTO

A rendering provided by Google shows a proposed data center campus in Botetourt County. A Q & A session with Google representatives regarding the project was held at an Amsterdam District town hall meeting last Thursday.



PHOTO BY MATT DE SIMONE

Big Spring Park's restored monument is shown following recent repairs.

Fincastle council receives clean audit, approves funds for backup generator

Matt de Simone

Managing Editor

Fincastle Town Council received a favorable audit report and approved using up to \$50,000 in remaining COVID-19 relief funds toward a backup generator for the town's main well during its Aug. 13 meeting.

Corbin Stone, CPA, of Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates PLLC, presented the town's audit for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025. Fincastle Mayor Mary Bess

Smith noted the town is a year behind on its financial statements because of its size and the workload involved in preparing the reports.

Stone said the town received an "unmodified" or "clean" opinion, meaning auditors determined the financial statements were materially correct. The audit found no significant deficiencies involving internal controls and no compliance issues requiring a report to the town.

"You're in good shape for

a town this size. You really are," Stone said.

The town had just over \$2 million in total net position at the end of the fiscal year, including approximately \$1.069 million associated with the water and sewer enterprise fund. The town had approximately \$1.7 million in liquid assets, including roughly \$800,000 in certificates of deposit.

The general fund balance grew to \$581,000 in 2025,

See **Fincastle**, page 11

BCPS 'resets' strategic direction, puts renewed focus on facilities

Matt de Simone

Managing Editor

Botetourt County Public Schools (BCPS) is resetting its strategic direction for the next four years, with a renewed focus on long-term facilities planning, career preparation, responsible technology use, and maintaining the division's academic performance.

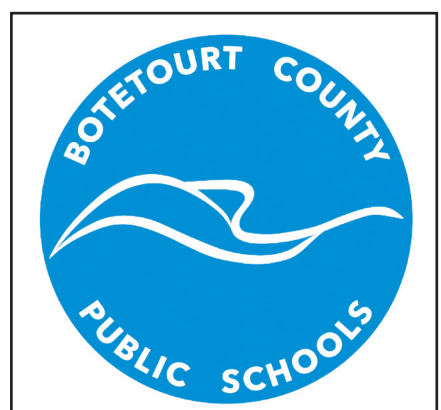
Assistant Superintendent Jordan Pinkard presented the proposed Strategic Direction 2026 to the Botetourt County School Board last Thursday, describing it as a "reset" of the direction adopted in 2022 rather than a complete redefinition.

The updated plan retains the three commitments established four years ago— Every Student, Every Employee and Every Learning Environment— but narrows the focus from 15 initiatives to 12. The initiatives are intended to guide BCPS through 2030.

Pinkard said the reset was prompted by a desire to review progress under the 2022 plan, gather broader community feedback and account for changes in education, particularly the rapid development of technology and artificial intelligence.

A strategic direction committee began meeting in January and included parents, teachers, principals, central office administrators, School Board members and community representatives. The group met four times during the spring, reviewing data and the previous initiatives before developing recommendations.

The division also conducted a community survey that received more than 549 responses. Pinkard said the survey was open to the entire community, although relatively few respondents were from outside the



FILE GRAPHIC

school community.

The feedback identified BCPS' employees, positive school culture, safe environments, community and belonging, and career and technical education programs as major strengths.

The survey also identified areas for improvement, including aging and deteriorating school buildings, overcrowding, and a desire for a new high school. Pinkard said respondents also called for a long-term facilities modernization plan rather than a series of piecemeal decisions.

Other feedback included expanding career exploration and hands-on learning into younger grades, incorporating life skills such as financial literacy and time management, providing additional challenges for advanced students, and expanding mental health and social/emotional support.

Technology and communication received mixed reviews. While the 2022 plan emphasized expanding one-to-one technology access, Pinkard said the new direction will focus more on responsible and ethical technology use, including artificial intelligence.

See **BCPS**, page 10



PHOTO COURTESY OF BEAVER DAM SUNFLOWERS

Thousands of sunflowers fill the fields at Beaver Dam Farm during the annual Sunflower Festival in Buchanan.

Beaver Dam Farm announces 2026 Sunflower Festival dates

Buchanan's Beaver Dam Farm Sunflower Festival will return for its 11th year in September, offering visitors a chance to experience thousands of sunflowers, hayrides, photo opportunities, food and handmade crafts.

The festival, held at the family-owned farm in Botetourt County, features a field of about 700,000 sunflowers and

more than 115 craft and food vendors. Organizers describe it as the largest sunflower festival and vendor fair on the East Coast.

Beaver Dam Farm has deep agricultural roots. Purchased in 1900, the property became a tomato cannery in 1916 and a dairy farm in 1927. Today, it remains a working beef cattle operation that also

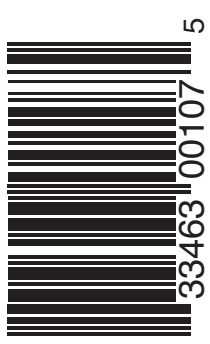
sells hay and straw.

The sunflower festival began with a simple idea.

"Back in 2015, we had an open field, and my father said out of the blue, 'I'm going to plant sunflowers,'" said Candace Monaghan, the festival's founder. "There was no other reason than he thought they were

See **Sunflower**, page 10

2026 SEASON Scan here for complete event schedule, and details. 	AUG 22 8:30 - NOON GOOD SHOT JUDY 5-9PM	SEPT 5 8:30 - NOON THE KINGS 5-9PM	SEPT 11 BIG MATT AND THE TIME MACHINE 5-9PM
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Botetourt County History

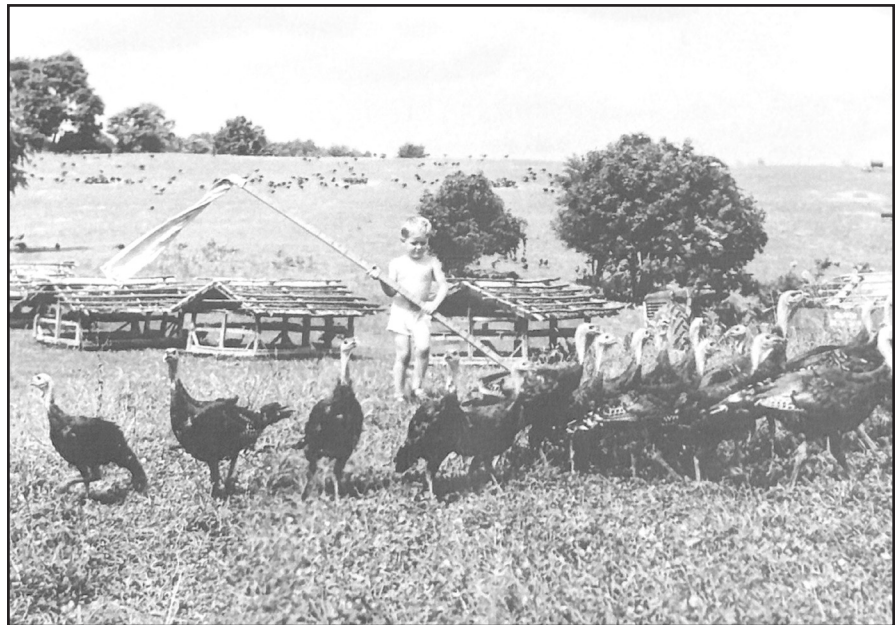


PHOTO COURTESY OF BCMHC

This photo of a young boy herding turkeys is in the Botetourt Museum of History & Culture's downstairs exhibit called "Home Grown: Botetourt's Agricultural History." It was taken around 1930 at Marshall Etzler's turkey farm in the Mount Union area. At the time there were several turkey and chicken farms throughout the county. For convenience there was a poultry processing plant in Troutville. The Etzlers also raised hogs and are well known for their country hams.

This photograph is courtesy of VPISU, VCESC, DLA and is on Page 62 of Debra Alderson McClane's book "Images of America Botetourt County" published in 2007 by Arcadia Publishing Company. Her book includes lots of historical photographs with descriptions and is available for \$26 in the History Museum bookstore on Fincastle's Main Street.

~ Botetourt County Museum of History & Culture

Historical Society announces 2026 Founder's Day Dinner

The Botetourt County Historical Society will celebrate its 18th annual Founder's Day Dinner on Sunday, Oct. 4, in the newly renovated Botetourt Room at The Glebe in Daleville.

The signature fundraising event will commemorate Botetourt County's history during the nation's 250th anniversary year.

This year's dinner will feature William "Bill" Barker, one of the nation's premier historical interpreters, whose portrayal of Thomas Jefferson has captivated audiences for decades.

Barker will step into the role of Jefferson for an evening exploring the life and ideas of America's third president, as well as his connections to the people, places and events that shaped Botetourt County and the early American republic.

For Botetourt audiences, Jefferson's story has a particularly local connection. The Lewis & Clark Expedition was commissioned by Jefferson, and the expedition's connection to Botetourt County runs deep. Local tradition and historical markers recognize Fincastle as the place from which Meriwether Lewis and William Clark departed as they began their journey



PHOTO COURTESY OF BCHS

William "Bill" Barker will portray Thomas Jefferson during this year's dinner.

west.

Jefferson's connections to the region extend beyond Lewis and Clark. Col. James Breckinridge, a prominent Botetourt figure who represented the county in the Virginia House of Delegates, corresponded with and was a friend of Jefferson and played a significant role in the political world of early Virginia.

Jefferson also had a well-known connection to Natural Bridge, a landmark he owned

and considered one of Virginia's great natural wonders. Natural Bridge was once located within the boundaries of Botetourt County.

Through Barker's portrayal, guests will have an opportunity to encounter Jefferson not simply as the author of the Declaration of Independence and the nation's third president, but as a Virginian whose life, interests,

See **BCHS**, page 5

Breckinridge Elementary students return for 2026-27 school year



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARCY WOHLFORD

Dad Jared Hayes brought his children Brody, Sophie, and Granger to Breckinridge during open house on August 10 to drop off school supplies in anticipation of the first day of school.

The 2026-27 school year got underway Wednesday, Aug. 12, as students across Botetourt County Public Schools returned to classrooms, including at Breckinridge Elementary School.

At Breckinridge, students arrived with backpacks and school supplies as they began a new year of classes. The

first day gave students an opportunity to settle into their classrooms and begin the school year with their teachers and classmates.

The return to school followed an open house last Monday, when families visited Breckinridge ahead of the first day. Jared Hayes brought his children,

Brody, Sophie and Granger, to the school during open house to drop off their school supplies.

On Wednesday, Student Leadership Council member Cameron Earnest helped kindergarten student Connor Turman find his

See **Return**, page 10



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SHANNON FARRAR

Greenfield Elementary kicks off school year with pep rally

Greenfield Elementary School kicked off the 2026-27 school year with a pep rally at the end of its first week of classes, bringing students and teachers together for an afternoon of fun, school spirit and character-building.

During the rally, students reviewed the school's four core values: Be kind, show respect, give your best effort and be responsible.

The values were put into action as teachers challenged several fifth grade students to participate in the "Cup Grabbing Game." The students

competed in the lighthearted challenge as their classmates watched and cheered them on.

The event provided an opportunity for students to celebrate the start of a new school year while reinforcing the character and values expected throughout the year.

With plenty of smiles, laughter and school spirit, Greenfield Elementary's first-week pep rally helped set the tone for the 2026-27 school year.

~ Fincastle Herald staff report

CORRECTION: An Aug. 12 article about Catherine Watts' 100th birthday incorrectly identified John Mays as her grandson. Mays is her son. The Fincastle Herald apologizes the error.

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Planning Commission delays solar ordinance amid concerns over farmland, restoration

The Botetourt County Planning Commission is asking for more time to review proposed changes to the county’s regulations governing solar energy facilities, with commissioners raising questions about agricultural land, site restoration, financial assurances, and how much local control remains under recent changes to Virginia law.

At its Aug. 10 meeting, the commission unanimously recommended denial of the current proposed zoning amendments and supported seeking an extension of the timeline for completing its review. The action does not prohibit solar facilities in Botetourt County. Instead, commissioners said they were not comfortable approving the draft after having limited time to review it.

The proposed amendments were developed after the Board of Supervisors authorized the Planning Commission in May to consider changes to the county’s zoning ordinance and comprehensive plan concerning solar facilities. County staff said the commission was working under a 100-day deadline and that Aug. 10 represented the end of that period.

Planner Jon McCoy recommended that the commission deny the amendments so the county could seek additional time to continue the work.

Recent changes to Virginia law are driving much of the proposed rewrite. The changes require localities to adjust their regulations concerning solar facilities and limit local authority over some aspects of solar development.

Among the changes are new classifications for solar facilities. Under the proposed regulations, utility-scale facilities would be those generating

more than 1 megawatt for primarily off-site use, while minor-scale facilities would be more than 20 kilowatts and up to 1 megawatt. Small-scale facilities would be 20 kilowatts or less.

State law also affects development standards such as panel height, vegetative buffers, and battery storage. Battery energy storage associated with a solar facility is now permitted as a by-right accessory use under the circumstances outlined by state law.

While some of the proposed changes are required by the state, the draft also contains restrictions requested by the county.

Those include prohibiting minor- and utility-scale ground-mounted solar facilities on federally designated prime farmland and preventing solar equipment and fencing from being placed on highly erodible or potentially highly erodible land. The proposal also addresses wildlife movement, vegetation buffers, and community meetings for prospective solar projects.

The commission spent considerable time discussing what happens after a solar facility is no longer operating.

Commissioner Mark Tyson questioned whether the county could establish a defined operating period for solar facilities, potentially limiting them to 15 or 20 years before requiring removal and restoration.

Tyson also raised concerns about the cost of restoring agricultural land decades after a solar facility is constructed. He suggested establishing a baseline record of soil conditions before construction, including soil samples, so the county would have a way to



FILE PHOTO

The Planning Commission is seeking additional time to review proposed changes to the county’s solar energy regulations.

determine whether the land had been returned to its previous condition.

County officials said existing regulations already require financial assurances for decommissioning. Under the proposed language, the surety would be based on a professional engineer’s estimate of the cost of removing the facility and restoring the property, plus an additional 10% for administrative costs, inflation, and potential damage to roads and utilities. The financial assurance would remain in place until the county verifies that the site has been restored and would follow the facility or property through ownership changes.

Commissioners nevertheless questioned whether the existing requirements would be sufficient if

restoration costs prove substantially higher than anticipated.

The discussion also turned to the process used to develop the proposed ordinance.

Tyson and other commissioners said they wanted a clearer breakdown of which provisions in the draft are mandated by state law and which remain within the county’s control. The commission asked staff to prepare that information before its next work session.

At one point, Tyson attempted to have local farmer and crop and soil scientist Tom Williamson participate in the discussion as an invited expert rather than simply as a member of the

See **Planning**, page 5

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SWVA DCTA criticizes Amsterdam town hall

An attempted town hall charm offensive by Botetourt County Supervisor Tim Snyder and representatives of Google (Aug. 13) came off to the residents who attended as merely offensive.

The monthly forum, held at the VFW Hall off Roanoke Road to discuss topics of interest to Snyder’s constituents, hosted three representatives from Google. They had prepared comments to assuage concerns about the company’s proposed Greenfield data center campus with talking points about water replenishment and electric grid stabilization, but were regularly taken off script by the skeptical audience.

“We just don’t want you here” went a frequent response. “Your answers are no good.”

“No good” was the best Snyder and the Google PR team could get themselves. Normally open to all, Thursday’s event only allowed residents of Snyder’s Amsterdam District. An unidentified man in rose-tinted shades stood in front of the door, arms crossed, turning away non-residents. The press was also barred entry, as it had been from Google’s events with the Roanoke City and Botetourt County Chambers of Commerce in April and July. They were joined by a dozen would-be attendees, who protested the lack of transparency.

“Tim introduced his meeting saying it was an opportunity for us to hear more. But what the company representatives presented was only more of the same talking points that citizens have repeatedly addressed as unacceptable,” said Scott Yates, a SWVA DCTA member and Amsterdam District property owner who was able to attend the town hall. “Our elected leaders’ apathy towards the will of the people is shocking on an emotional level, and it’s antithetical to the democratic process.”

The meeting was the second time in three weeks that Snyder had publicly alienated his own voters. A speech he gave but may not have authored at July’s Board of Supervisors meeting, pitching a board-controlled alternative to the Planning

Commission’s proposed independent water supply study, prompted a heated exchange with Buchanan Supervisor Linda Rottman, and jeers from the gallery. So too did his disclaimers of non-involvement with the Google deal, despite having chaired the Planning Commission when zoning was amended to clear the way for the development.

Ben Verschoor and Julie Bivins, Southwest Virginia Data Center Transparency Alliance

Green Line could protect rural Botetourt

Having lived in Botetourt County my entire life and owned and operated an electrical construction business for 49 years, I have witnessed firsthand the changes our community has experienced. I have also had the privilege of serving four years on the Planning Commission (1995-1998), 16 years on the Board of Supervisors (1998-2013), and 13 years as your State Delegate for Botetourt County (2013–2026).

While growing up here, many of the conveniences we now enjoy simply did not exist in Botetourt County. Today, we can grocery shop, enjoy a meal at a local restaurant, participate in cultural activities, and take advantage of a growing range of recreational opportunities, all within our own county. We also have three small towns – Buchanan, Fincastle and Troutville – where we have the pleasure of walking the streets, shopping, dining and receiving service benefits.

Given the proximity to Roanoke County and the City of Roanoke, with the ease of convenience getting to these two locations, along with it came the growth and expansive development – much of which many fear has grown too fast, leading to the lack of long-range planning. Given that, I, over time, have felt at some point we should begin to protect our rural character and give more consideration to planned growth and development.

Having discussed extensively with county staff over time, one concept worth exploring is the potential for what was implemented in Virginia Beach in 1979

and defined today as the “Green Line.” The Green Line is a boundary drawn across a locality that allows for higher density development on one side and less dense development on the other. As an example, a 100-acre parcel beyond the Green Line would allow development to be concentrated on a 60-acre cluster, while 40 acres would remain greenspace.

The higher density land-use would not prohibit or restrict property owners from developing their property. It would, going forward, place special conditions on those developments, which could bring potential net gains to the property, creating a more desirable and environmentally friendly area compatible with the agricultural nature of our county.

The areas around the towns of Fincastle and Buchanan would be allowed to grow to a higher density within a given radius, conceivably one to two miles beyond the town boundary. Fincastle, as an example, to protect its historical significance, should probably have within the boundary an historical overlay with covenants for architectural design and review.

Though I am no longer in local government, where zoning is one of the primary functions, I share the same frustrations as many others who believe our growth could be better managed. After numerous attempts over the years to suggest and recommend consideration, it’s my

understanding that county administration is now seriously considering this concept. I appreciate the county’s desire to preserve and protect future greenspace.

Terry Austin Buchanan

Letter addresses August Planning Commission meeting

The Planning Commission (PC) meeting on August 10 was just like most of them with Mark Tyson, as usual, trying and wanting to be the center of attention and not understanding the purpose for which Botetourt County has a planning commission.

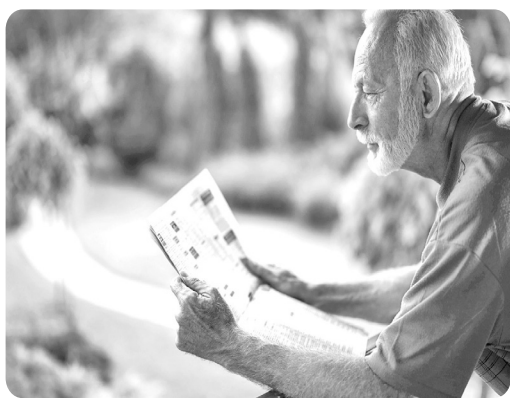
Now, with the water study destined to be conducted by an “unbiased panel” instead of a panel that includes him, he had to invent a new way to attempt to be the star of the show.

So, what did he do? He had to get something on the agenda he wanted to talk about which had nothing to do with the mission of the PC, even though there were other important matters to be heard that evening. Accordingly, he put on the screen and read a snippet from an alleged

See **Letters**, page 10

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4:30-5:30pm Ages 12-16, \$165

5:30-7:00pm Community Chorus, \$175

32. Soft drinks
33. Capital of Guam
34. Chemical compound
36. The bill in a restaurant
37. Car mechanics group
38. Late comedian Newhart
40. Health care for the aged
41. Wise individuals
43. A passage with access only at one end
44. Trim
46. Former OSS
47. The upper surface of the mouth
49. Edible lily bulbs
50. Type of reef
51. Vaccine developer
52. Mottled citrus fruit
53. A place to store lawn tools
54. Rare goose native to Hawaii
57. Hollywood pig
58. Musician Clapton
59. Take a chance
61. Spanish soldier
62. Mark Wahlberg comedy

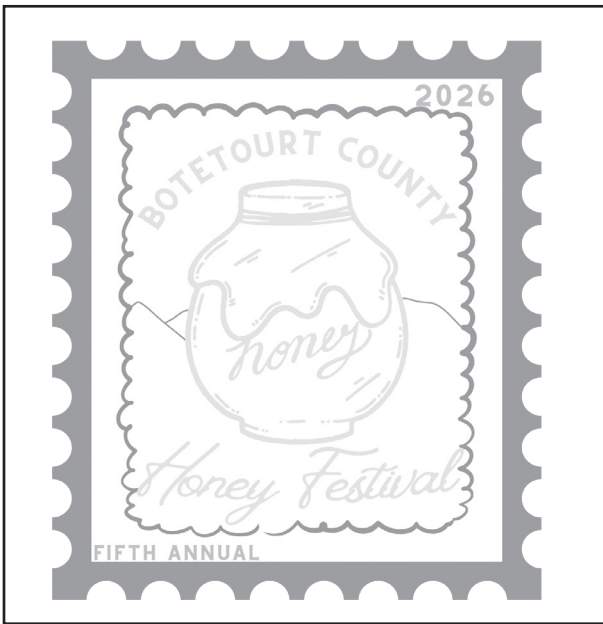
See **Answers** page 10

Botetourt County Honey Festival returns Sept. 26

The fifth annual Botetourt County Honey Festival is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 26, at Buchanan Town Park. Hosted by the Botetourt Beekeepers Association, the festival will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and will feature a celebration of honey, beekeeping, and the county's beekeeping community.

For those planning to attend the Fincastle Festival that Saturday, the Honey Festival offers another stop to add to the day. Visitors can make the short trip from Fincastle to Buchanan and take in both community events. Additional details about activities at the Honey Festival have not yet been announced. The association is seeking vendors and volunteers, with information available through the QR code on the festival's save-the-date announcement.

The event marks the fifth year of the Botetourt



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF BBA

Beekeepers Association's Honey Festival. Organizers are encouraging residents to save the date for what they promise will be "a sweet time."

- Fincastle Herald staff report

Haymakertown Road closure begins Monday

Weather permitting, a section of Route 666 (Haymakertown Road) will be closed to through traffic beginning Monday, August 24, for a bridge replacement, according to a news release from the Virginia Department of Transportation.

The bridge is located on Haymakertown Road between Route 665 (Country Club Road) and Route 664 (Asbury Lane). Residents will still have access to their homes on either side of the closure. A signed detour will direct through traffic around the closure.

This project is expected to be completed by early September.

- VDOT

Botetourt Chamber of Commerce opens registration for annual golf tournament

The Botetourt Chamber of Commerce is accepting registrations for its annual golf tournament, scheduled for Friday, Oct. 16, at Botetourt Golf & Swim Club.

The tournament brings together golfers, business leaders and community partners for an afternoon of golf and networking. The Chamber is encouraging local businesses to register a team or consider sponsoring the event.

Registration will begin at 11 a.m., followed by lunch at 11:30 a.m. and a 1 p.m. shotgun start.

The tournament includes 18 holes of golf, lunch, player gift bags and unlimited beverage carts, according to the Chamber.

In addition to providing an opportunity for businesses and employees to connect outside the office,

the tournament will benefit Food Lion Feeds. Proceeds will support area food banks.

Sponsorship opportunities are available at several investment levels, giving businesses an opportunity to promote their organizations while supporting the tournament and its charitable beneficiary.

Teams and sponsors can register through the Botetourt Chamber of Commerce website. Register a team or learn about sponsorship opportunities

The Chamber described the tournament as an opportunity for participants to "play, connect and get noticed" while supporting the local community.

- Fincastle Herald staff report

SALEM RIDGEYAKS VS WILSON WARBIRDS



AUGUST 19th 6:35 PM
AUGUST 20th 6:35 PM
Hockey Night
AUGUST 21st 6:35 PM
Racing Night
AUGUST 22nd 6:35 PM Military Appreciation Night
AUGUST 23rd 4:05 PM

BCHS from page 2

relationships and ambitions intersected with the history of Botetourt County.

Barker portrayed Jefferson at Colonial Williamsburg for more than 20 years and now serves as Jefferson at Monticello, where he continues to bring the life, words and vision of Jefferson to visitors from around the world.

His presentation is expected to make this year's Founder's Day Dinner a memorable evening as communities across the Commonwealth and nation mark the 250th anniversary of American independence.

The Founder's Day Dinner also serves as an important fundraiser for the Botetourt County

Historical Society. Proceeds support the society's efforts to preserve and share Botetourt County's history through museum exhibits, educational programs, artifact conservation, public events and community outreach.

The Historical Society invites businesses, organizations, community members and history enthusiasts to attend the event and celebrate Botetourt County's place in the larger American story.

Tickets are \$50 and are available for purchase at the museum in Fincastle or through Eventbrite. Seating is limited.

- Fincastle Herald staff report



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ASSEMBLIES OF GOD
New Beginnings Assembly of God, 1317 Narrow Passage Rd., 43 North. Sunday School, 10:00a.m.; Worship, 11a.m.; Wednesday Prayer & Bible Study, 6:00p.m., Pastor Steve Tremblay, email: pastorstevetremblay@gmail.com. Everyone welcome.
Troutville Assembly of God, 118 Conner Lane, P.O. Box 728, Troutville, VA 24175, Pastor Dennis Carroll, 540-960-1224, Sunday Morning Worship 10:30 a.m., Children’s Church 11:00 a.m., Wednesday Bible Study 7:00 p.m., Everyone welcome.

INDEPENDENT BAPTIST
Crossroads Baptist Church - 1128 Wheatland Rd., Buchanan, Pastor Elmer Clemons, (540) 510-0927 Home, Sunday School 10:00 A.M., Morning Worship, 11:00 A.M., Sunday Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday Prayer & Bible Study 5:30 P.M.
Faith Baptist Church— 4258 Botetourt Rd., Fincastle, VA. 24090, Pastor, Dr. John W. Reynolds, Phone; 540-473-2325, Email: jwr56fbc@yahoo.com, Church website: fincastlefaith.com, Services: 10 A.M. Bible Expositions, 11 A.M. Worship & Children’s Church, 7 P.M. Wednesday Bible Study & Prayer, Messages at www.youtube.com/@faithfbaptistchurch9219. We look forward to meeting you.
Lapsleys Run Baptist Church- 608 Zion Hill Road, Fincastle. 540-556-3504. Worship: 2nd & 4th Sundays at 11:00a.m.
New Hope Baptist Church— 2315 Blue Ridge Blvd. (US 460), 977-6610, Pastor David McNeill; Sunday School, 9:45AM; Worship, 10:45AM, 7PM; Wed., Bible Study 7PM; Kings Kids, 7PM; Daycare and Preschool, Mon-Fri. 6:30AM-6PM.

Valley View Baptist Church— 17471 Main St., Buchanan; Rev. Daniel Boone, 254-2760 (church), 254-2570 (H). Sunday School, 10 AM; worship, 11 AM, Sunday Evening, 6:30 PM; Wednesday: Prayer and Youth Ministries, 7 PM, Word Of Life youth ministry for 4 year olds-12th grade Wednesdays at 7 p.m.
SOUTHERN BAPTIST
Bonsack Baptist Church - 4845 Cloverdale Rd. (Alt. 220) Dr. Chris Cadenhead, 977-5701, Sunday School, 8:30a.m. and 11a.m.; Worship 9:45a.m.; Wed. Bible study, 6 p.m.
Buchanan Baptist Church – 19730 Main Street, Buchanan, Sunday Bible Study for all ages 9:45 a.m.; Worship at 11 a.m. Wednesday Fellowship Meal at 6 p.m. followed by Bible Study and activities for all ages. Facebook - Buchanan Baptist Church; Web Site - buchananbaptist.com; Phone - 254-2253, Minister of Music - Stephen Harris
Daleville Baptist Church— Corner of Valley Rd. and Orchard Dr., 992-1570; Senior Pastor Wes Belcher;

Sunday School 9:15 AM, Worship 10:30 AM; Wednesday: Prayer & Bible Study - 6:30 PM, Youth - 6:30 PM
Fincastle Baptist Church— Located at 7330 Roanoke Rd., Fincastle, Rt. 220, 1 mile south of Fincastle, 540-473-2861; www.fincastlebaptist.org; Sr. Pastor Kevin B. Cummings. Sunday Mornings, we offer a dual Bible Study/Worship Service at both 9:00 am and 10:45 am. On Wednesday evenings, we offer events for the entire family: Kids Club (3 years-5th grade) 6:15-7:30 pm; Middle School Ignite (Grades 6-8) 6:15-7:15 pm; Adult Bible Study 6:30-7:30 pm; Ignite High School Group (Grades 9-12) 7:45-8:45 pm; and childcare (birth-36 months).
Forest Grove Baptist Church— 693 Mt. Moriah Rd. (Rt. 681), Eagle Rock, Rev. Jerry Marsh, Pastor. Sunday School, 9:30 a.m., Worship 10:35 a.m., Wed., Bible Study 7 p.m.
Glade Creek Baptist Church – 3148 Webster Road, Blue Ridge, Virginia 24064. Pastor Steve McChesney. Phone 540-977-1686 or 540-798-7462. Sunday School 9:45 a.m., Sunday Worship Service 11:00 a.m., to include Chidren’s Church. Wednesday evening Worship and Bible study begins with a meal at 6:30 p.m.
Mill Creek Baptist Church –11475 Lee Hwy., Fincastle, 992-3474. Danny Quirin, Pastor. Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.; Worship 8:30 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.; Wednesday night activities begin at 6pm: Bible study, children and youth activities, choir and handbell rehearsals follow. office@millcreekbc.com
Pleasant Hill Baptist Church – 4930 Country Club Road (corner of Country Club & Haymakertown Roads), 540-992-5556. Pastor Danny Barham. Sunday School, 10 a.m.; Worship Service, 11 a.m. Worship can also be viewed online at the PHBC Facebook page or on Youtube (PHBCtube). Other activities and schedules can be found at www.phbcweb.com.
Springwood Baptist Church – 88 Copps Hill Rd., Buchanan; Rev. Mike Anderson, 540-819-4616, Email pmike09@outlook.com. Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.: worship 11 a.m.: Wednesday night bible study will be held every first and third Wednesday of the month from 6:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.
Troutville Baptist Church –P.O. Box 309, Troutville, VA 24175; 992-1026, Rev. Carol Johnston. Sunday School 10:00AM; Worship 11AM. Wednesday: Adult Prayer & Bible Study, 6:15PM; Youth & Children Activities 6:30PM.
Zion Hill Baptist Church— Intersection of Zion Hill Road and Old Fincastle Road. Pastor Donald Goforth (540) 884-2285. Sunday School -10 AM Worship 11AM. Youth Activities (grades 6-12) and Kingdom Kids (preschool-grade 5) Wednesdays at 5:30 PM.

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
Cloverdale Church of the Brethren— 4708 Read Mtn. Rd., 992-1060; Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; worship, 10:30 a.m.; Wed. (Sept.-May), Family Dinner, 6 p.m., Bible study, 6:45 p.m.

Cities of Refuge

Read Joshua 18:1 through 20:9

Once the Children of Israel entered the Promised Land, it had to be divided amongst the tribes. Joshua asked for a survey to be done, and with that information he carefully assigned each tribe their portion.

Chapter 20 addresses an interesting issue that reflects God’s passion for justice. The “eye for an eye” principle was in vogue in those days, and God wanted justice for those who killed someone accidentally.

“Tell the Israelites to designate the cities of refuge, as I instructed you through Moses, so that anyone who kills a person accidentally and unintentionally may flee there and find protection from the avenger of blood.” (Joshua 20:2–3).

What a great picture of Jesus and His compassion for us. Our sins can be accidental or unintentional, but sadly we sometimes disobey on purpose. Yet in either case, Jesus invites us to come to Him, confessing our sin. He promises to forgive us and cleanse us (1 John 1:9). He provides us the ultimate refuge from our mistakes.

Prayer for Today: Lord, when my thoughts, words, or actions are not pleasing to You, I will run to You because I know You are my “city of refuge.”

Quicklook: Joshua 20:1–9

Preschool, after-school care & summer day camp for preschool and elementary age children. Patrick Starkey, Pastor; Shawna Burkhart, preschool director.
Mt. Bethel Church of the Brethren— 10603 Narrow Passage Rd., Eagle Rock. PO Box. 183 Eagle Rock, VA 24085. Interim Pastor Dreama Osborne. 884-2292 (church), 540-597-8272 (cell). Sunday School, 10 AM; worship, 11 AM; Ladies’ Aid meets 2nd Thurs. monthly.
Mt. Joy Church of the Brethren— 2565 Buffalo Rd., 10 miles N of Buchanan, 254-2298. Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m. Pastor Michael Tabor, (540) 309-7595.
Pleasant Dale Church of the Brethren, 3732 Breckinridge Mill Rd, Fincastle, Rev. Dr. David A. Tozar - pastor, Sunday worship at 11am, preceded by coffee fellowship at 10:30, Bible Study Sunday at 4pm, 5th Sunday Potluck luncheon, Handicap Accessible, Contact Pastor Davd at dtozar9@yahoo.com. Follow on Facebook, Sunday worship and Bible study stream live.
Troutville Church of the Brethren - 5133 Lee Hwy., 992-1571; Terry R. Johnson, Pastor; Don Obenshain, Choir Director. Sunday Morning Services: Sunday School, 10 am; Worship Service, 11 am. Sunday Night Meetings: Family Fellowship Sept-May. Wednesday Night Bible Study, 6:00 pm Sept-May. Choir practice, 7:00 pm. Praise Band Family Practice Thursdays 7p.m. Family Fellowship Time will be held each 3rd Sunday of the month. Our email address is: troutvillecob@hotmail.com and website is troutvillecob.org.

ECKANKAR
Eckankar, The Path of Spiritual Freedom, is a simple teaching that focuses on the Light and Sound of God to help people find more

love in their life. We offer a Spiritual Event on the 2nd. Sunday of each month. The program may be a Light and Sound Service, a Spiritual video and discussion, or other topics and techniques to help Raise Your Spiritual IQ. The Roanoke ECK Center is located at 1420 3rd. St. SW, Roanoke, VA 24016. For more information visit www.eck-va.org or call 540- 353-5365. People of all faiths are welcome.

EPISCOPAL
St. Mark’s Episcopal Church – 111 S. Roanoke St., Fincastle. P.O. Box 277 Fincastle, VA 24090. The Rev. G. Willis Logan, Rector. 473-2370. Worship in the sanctuary and by Zoom on Sunday mornings at 10:00am, with Adult Education on Sunday mornings from 9:00 to 9:50am. Evening Prayer is Wednesday evenings at 7:30pm by Zoom. Brown Bag Bible Study on Thursdays at 12 noon in the Ministry Center and by Zoom. Links for Zoom can be found on our website, www.stmarksfincastle.org.

LUTHERAN
Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church (WELS) – 9068 Cloverdale Road, Troutville, VA; Paul Workentine, Pastor; Worship Sunday at 10:00 AM. Sunday School at 11:30 AM. Info and calendar at osloanoke.com. Phone: 540-977- 4888.
Wheatland Evangelical Lutheran Church— 1560 Wheatland Road, Buchanan, 24066; 540-254-1605. Sunday worship service, 10:30 a.m. (in person or parking lot, tune car radio to 88.9 FM). Interim Pastor: Phyllis Diamond. Facebook, <http://www.wheatlandlutheran.org>; teemwheatland@gmail.com

NON-DENOMINATIONAL
Grace Bible Church of Botetourt – 148 Amsterdam Rd. (beside the south lane of 220 in Amsterdam, 1.5 miles north of LBHS). Sunday Worship, 10 a.m. Pastor Jay Robinette - 855-4620.
Mt. Carmel Church, 6 miles south of Eagle Rock at intersection of Rt. 43 and 688; pastor, Richard Ronk; phone # (540) 884-3653; Sunday School at 10:00 A.M., Worship at 11:00 A.M., Wed. Prayer Meeting at 7:00 P.M.
Woodland Church – We Present Christ – 45 Woodland Rd. Troutville, VA. Corner of Blacksburg/ Country Club Rds., 3.5 miles W. of Fincastle. 540-632-1515. Pastor: Caleb Lythgoe. Sunday School, 10AM; Worship, 11AM, Wed. Prayer Meeting 6:30PM. Website: woodlandchurchbc.com. E-mail address: woodlandchurchbc@gmail.com.

PRESBYTERIAN
Buchanan Presbyterian Church – 19559 Main St. Buchanan. 540-254-1390. Donna Hopkins Britt, Pastor. Choir rehearsal at 9:00 am. Sunday School at 10:00 am. Worship at 11:00 am. Videotaped services can be viewed on YouTube. The Food Pantry is open from 9-11 a.m. on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month. Handicap accessible. Facebook page or website: www.buchananpresbyterian.org. Contact www.admin@buchananpresbyterian.org

Fincastle Presbyterian

Church – 108 E. Back Street, Fincastle, VA 24090. The Rev. Dr. David Dickerson, Supply Minister, Lori Turner, Music Director. Worship service in the Sanctuary and via Live Streaming (<https://www.facebook.com/fincastlepresbyterianchurch>) at 10:30 AM. Adult Sunday School offered at 9:30 AM Fellowship time in the Fellowship Hall immediately following morning service. Bell choir practices after Sunday Fellowship, often providing special music in our services. For more information please email fincastlepresbyterianchurch@gmail.com or call 540.473.2042.

Galatia Evangelical Presbyterian Church -78 Gala Loop Road, Eagle Rock, VA 24085. Rev. Emily B. Hook, pastor, 804-516-6552. Sunday School at 10 a.m. each Sunday. Morning Worship & Praise at 11a.m. each Sunday. Communion once each quarter.

Virginia Presbyterian Church – 918 Pico Road, Buchanan, 24066. Worship 9:30 a.m. (nursery provided), Sunday School, 10:30 a.m.

ROMAN CATHOLIC Church of the Transfiguration— 7624 Roanoke Rd., Fincastle, VA 24090; Fr. Zaverio “Xavier” Banasula. 473-2656. Saturday Mass at 4:30pm & Sunday at 8:30am; Christian formation after Mass on Sunday.

UNITED METHODIST
Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church – 3936 Beaver Dam Road, just off Springwood Road, Springwood. Rev. Morris A. Bennett. Sunday School, 9:15 a.m. followed by Worship, 10 a.m.
Eagle Rock United Methodist Church – 14565 Church St., Eagle Rock, 10:15 AM; Glen Wilton UMC, Main St., Glen Wilton, 9:00 AM; Shiloh UMC, Shiloh Rd, Eagle Rock, 11:15 AM. Pastor Ray Sandifer (540) 525-0258. Mail donations for the building fund to P.O. Box 85, Eagle Rock.

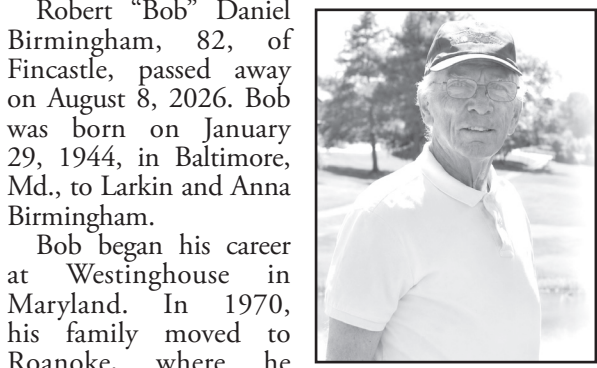
Fincastle United Methodist Church – Sunday School at 9 a.m. in the Family Life Center. In person services Sunday, 10 a.m. in the sanctuary, 136 S. Church St., Fincastle. Service is also live streamed on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/@FincastleUMCMedia> or on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100068517955699>. Reverend Scott A. Robertson-Gouge, office, 540-473-3001. Office hours: Tues., Wed., & Thurs.: 9a.m.-2p.m. E-mail: office@fincastleumc.org.
St. Mark’s United Methodist Church – 19 Cedar Ridge Drive, Daleville. Pastor Samuel Plymale, 992-3030. We have one service on Sundays at 10:00am, with Sunday School for children, youth, and adults following at 11:00am. Shipyard Youth meets every Sunday from 4:00 to 6:00pm, unless there is a special monthly mission event. Frogs and Tadpoles Children’s Ministry meets on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month, September through April, from 4:00 to 6:00pm.
Trinity United Methodist Church – 19637 Main St., Buchanan; Rev. Greg Knopff, (540) 471-3747, (O) 540-254-2475. Worship, 9:45AM, Sunday School 10:30 AM.

OBITUARIES

Birmingham, Robert Daniel

January 29, 1944 - August 8, 2026

he enjoyed golf and the friendships he made with his golf group, affectionately known as the “Hot Shots.” In later years he enjoyed playing cards, particularly gin rummy, and always enjoyed trying to win those hands!



Robert “Bob” Daniel Birmingham, 82, of Fincastle, passed away on August 8, 2026. Bob was born on January 29, 1944, in Baltimore, Md., to Larkin and Anna Birmingham.

Bob began his career at Westinghouse in Maryland. In 1970, his family moved to Roanoke, where he joined his wife’s family business, Piedmont Foundry Supply, Inc. He started by doing whatever needed to be done – loading and unloading trucks and railcars, making sales calls and deliveries, and learning the foundry business from the ground up. Through hard work and dedication, he built a 56-year career that became one of the great passions of his life.

Bob traveled throughout the East Coast calling on customers, many of who became lifelong friends. In 1995, he was named President of Piedmont Foundry Supply. He was also a member of the American Foundry Society and served as Chapter Chairman from 1990-1991.

Above all else, Bob was a family man. He met the love of his life, Carol Sue, at Glen Burnie High School, and they married on October 17, 1964. Together, they shared a deep and lasting love for 59 years. Bob and Sue raised three daughters, Cyndi, Marcy, and Nikki. Bob was fiercely protective of his family and took great pride in being their provider. His family always knew they could count on him.

Bob was incredibly proud of his seven grandchildren, who brought him tremendous joy. He was affectionately known as their “Pop” and loved watching them grow. He especially enjoyed taking his family on vacations, watching the grandchildren play by the pool, and spending time together on boat outings. He was also blessed with five great-grandchildren, who brought a special kind of joy to his later years.

Bob was a longtime member of the Roanoke Country Club, where

his family. His daughters will miss his guidance and steady presence, and the pride he took in his family.

Bob was preceded in death by his loving wife, Carol Sue Birmingham; his parents, Larkin and Anna Birmingham; and his brothers, John and Lark Birmingham.

Bob is survived and forever remembered by his daughters and sons-in-law, Cyndi and Eric Reese, Marcy and Robbie Gallagher, and Nikki and John Waff; seven grandchildren, Corey Gallagher and his wife McKenna, Branden Bowen and fiancée Jasmine, Brittany Deisher and her husband Hunter, Kacey Bryan and her husband Dylan, Nicholas Bowen, Garrett Reese and Halle Reese; and his five great-grandchildren, Joella, Weston and Lainey Bryan, and Jonah and Jemma Deisher.

Bob’s legacy is reflected in the business to which he devoted so much of his life, but even more so in the family he loved so deeply. He took great pride in his work and in the relationships and friendships it brought into his life. But his greatest pride was his family and the life they shared together.

A Memorial Service will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, August 22, 2026, at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 42 E. Main Street., Salem. The service will be officiated by Father Ned Morris and followed by a reception. Flowers will be accepted, or memorials may be made to the Boys and Girls Club of SWVA or First Tee.

Arrangements are by Rader Funeral Home, Daleville, 540-992-1212.

Simmons, Betty Johnson

April 22, 1936 – Aug. 9, 2026

often for weeks at a time. Betty was happiest spending the entire day on the sand and under the sun. The beach remained one of her favorite places throughout her life.

Betty Johnson Simmons, 90, of Troutville, passed away on August 9, 2026, in Myrtle Beach, S.C., surrounded by family. She was born April 22, 1936, in Buchanan to Clarence Edward Johnson and Sallie Mays Johnson.

Betty’s life centered around her family, and nothing brought her more joy than the occasions when everyone could be together. She was known for cooking large family meals for every holiday, always hoping to have the people she loved gathered in one place. She always found a reason to go shopping and took great joy in spoiling her grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. Betty also treasured time with her sisters, whose endless conversation and laughter were a constant throughout their lives.

The beach held a particularly special place in Betty’s life. She and Hugh spent many cherished years at Myrtle Beach, beginning with annual family trips with their two sons each August and sharing many trips with their siblings and extended family. As the family grew, those trips continued with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren,

wife Donna, Danny Simmons and wife Julie; grandchildren, Jason Simmons, Stephanie Simmons, Jessica Clarke and husband Joshua; and great-grandchildren, Axel, Ryland, Nevaeh, Kai, Jayce, Jazzlynn, and Ivie; step-grandchildren, Erik Wampler and wife, Martha, Chelsey Craft and husband, Jared.

She is also survived by nieces, Tammy Coffey and husband Jeffery, and Janie Coley; nephews, Lewis Montgomery and wife Kathy, and Eddie Johnson and wife Nancy; and great-nephews, Taylor, Austin, and Logan Campbell; along with many other beloved family members.

Visitation will be held from 12-2 p.m. with funeral services at 2 p.m. on Saturday, August 22, 2026 in the Buchanan Chapel of Botetourt Funeral Home. Interment will follow in Mill Creek Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to the Cancer Society or the Kidney Foundation. Online condolences may be shared with the family at www.botetourtfh.com or by calling 540-254-3000.

Serving With Compassion



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Buchanan | Eagle Rock

254-3000 | 884-2276

14920 Lee Highway | 14777 Church Street

Karen C. Young, Funeral Director

Locally owned & operated by I. Ray & Bobbi Sloan

Harlow, Delbert Ray

Delbert Ray Harlow, 73, of Eagle Rock, passed away peacefully on Thursday, August 13, 2026.

He also worked at Walmart as an inventory stocker.

He was preceded in passing by his parents, Raymond D. Harlow and Louise Barnes Hostetter; brothers, Linzsey Barnes, Robert Barnes, and Fred Hostetter; and sister, Sue Harlow Sparks.

Delbert enjoyed singing in the choir at Eagle Rock Baptist Church. He also enjoyed cars and spending time with his beloved fur baby, Tippy. He graduated from James River High School in the early ’70s and worked at Groendyk in Buchanan until it closed in 2008.



Left to cherish Delbert’s memory are his sister, Minnie Craft; fur baby, Tippy; and numerous nieces, nephews, and friends.

The family received friends at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, August 18, 2026, in the Eagle Rock Chapel of Botetourt Funeral Home. A funeral service followed at 12 noon in the chapel, with Pastor Billy Ronk officiating. Interment was in Eagle Rock Baptist Church Cemetery.

Online condolences may be shared with the family at www.botetourtfh.com or by calling 540-254-3000.

CHURCH NEWS

Trinity UMC Baby Pantry open August 22

Those in need of diapers and baby formula may come to the Baby Pantry at Trinity United Methodist Church, 19637 Main Street, Buchanan, from 9 a.m. to noon on the fourth Saturday of the month. The Baby Pantry will be open this month on August 22. Enter on Washington Street side of the building.

Fincastle Clothes Closet August dates

Fincastle United Methodist’s Clothes Closet will be open on Saturday, August 29, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. in the Family Life Center at 137 S. Church Street. Donations of gently worn, clean

clothing and shoes also will be accepted. Call the church office at 540-473-3001 to arrange to bring donations during office hours, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Tuesday-Thursday.

Ice cream supper at Andrew Chapel

Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church will hold its annual ice cream supper on Saturday, September 5, beginning at 5 p.m. Meals include hot dogs or bratwurst with full fixings and chips. A variety of homemade ice cream and desserts will also be available. Music will be provided by Mike Lee & Friends. Proceeds benefit the church building fund. Andrew Chapel is located at 3936 Beaver Dam Road, just off Springwood Road, in Buchanan.

Community Women’s Retreat Aug. 29 in Buchanan

Join women from across the community for a day of connection, reflection and fellowship in a beautiful setting.

The retreat will be held Saturday, Aug. 29, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at The Barn at Back Creek, 528 Back Creek Lane, Buchanan. Participants are welcome to attend for as much of the day as they are able.

Lunch will be provided, and casual dress is encouraged.

Registration is required by Aug. 20.

To register, leave a message on the Buchanan Presbyterian Church phone at 540-254-1390 and include any dietary needs.

For questions, contact Kim Bennett at kimbennett354@gmail.com or 540-580-8194, or Donna Hopkins Britt at donnabpc@gmail.com.

The retreat is sponsored by Buchanan Presbyterian Church.

- Fincastle Herald staff report

AARP Scam Alert: Fraud victims, re-victimized

Having money stolen from you in a scam can be devastating. Unfortunately, scammers know that victims are often eager to recover their money, and they use that hope to strike again.

In what’s known as a recovery scam, criminals pose as government officials, private investigators, or “recovery experts” who claim they can help get your money back. They may contact you through emails, texts, social media, or websites that look legitimate. But instead of helping, they’re trying to steal more of your money or personal information. Experts believe this could become the most common scam of the year.

You may wonder how victims are targeted following a fraud experience. Sometimes, it’s the same organized crime ring coming back to steal more under a different set of lies. Criminals create and sell lead lists among each other, and their victims show up on those lists as hot targets for re-victimizing. Protecting yourself after a fraud experience requires extra caution. Ignore any unsolicited offers to get your money back, as much as you want to believe it’s possible.

Learn how to spot and avoid scams with AARP Fraud Watch Network. Suspect a scam? Call the free helpline at 877-908-3360 and talk to a specialist about what to do next.

- AARP



Congratulations to Bailee Blankenship of Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital Palliative Care Unit, Oakey’s May 2026, Hospice Caregivers Award winner. Thank you, Bailee, for all you do. To nominate a hospice caregiver, visit oakeys.com/hospice-caregiver-award.



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Legals - City of Salem

ABC NOTICE
CARINA DUE LLC., trading as DOM VITO'S,
10 WEST MAIN STREET,
Salem VA. 24153.

The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Retail Restaurant Wine, Beer, Mixed Beverages Consumed On or Off Premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages.

Dominic Vito Marletta, Owner.

NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
Pursuant to Section 22.1-29.1 of the Code of Virginia, as amended to date, notice is hereby given that the Council of the City of Salem will hold a public hearing at 6:30 p.m., September 14, 2026, in Council Chambers, City Hall, 114 North Broad Street, Salem, Virginia, to receive views of citizens within the Salem School District regarding the appointment to fill the expiring term ending 12/31/2026 of one member on the City of Salem School Board. All candidates seeking appointment must submit a letter of interest and résumé to the Deputy Clerk of Council. Submissions are requested by noon on Friday, September 11, 2026, however in all cases must be submitted prior to the closing of this public hearing. Candidates may be interviewed individually by City Council. THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SALEM, VIRGINIA
H. Robert Light
Clerk of Salem City Council

VDOT
Virginia Department of Transportation
ADVERTISEMENT FOR SNOW REMOVAL EQUIPMENT SERVICES WITH OPERATOR SIGNUP

The Virginia Department of Transportation invites heavy equipment owners to sign up for the rental of their equipment with operators for SNOW & ICE REMOVAL purposes in Salem Residency which includes the counties of Roanoke, Botetourt and Craig during the winter of 2026-2027. Price per hour shall include operators, fuel, tire chains, supplies and required insurance. VDOT will need dump trucks, pickups with plows, motorgaders, backhoes,

Legals - City of Salem

dozers, track loaders, tractors, rubbertire loaders and farm tractors. All equipment shall be equipped for night work and be in good mechanical condition to ensure a safe and dependable 24/7 operation. VDOT reserves the right to determine acceptability of equipment size and condition for the task. Contractors submitting prices meeting the requirements of the Agreement may be contracted with and may be eligible to receive a bonus payment and a minimum guaranteed payment for the season. Contractors must submit their application on the electronic M7B bidding site at <https://plow4va.vdot.virginia.gov>. All new and returning Contractors must be active in the Virginia eProcurement Portal (eVA) in order to do business with the Commonwealth of Virginia (<https://eva.virginia.gov>). Applications received by 7:00 PM on Friday September 18, 2026 may be eligible for a bonus payment. See the EVA posting for additional information, including contract requirements. Questions can be directed to the Salem Residency from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday – Friday. Phone: 540-387-5497. Email: SalemDistrictSnow@vdot.virginia.gov
EEO/AA Employee

Legals - Montgomery County

VDOT
Virginia Department of Transportation
ADVERTISEMENT FOR SNOW REMOVAL EQUIPMENT SERVICES WITH OPERATOR SIGNUP

The Virginia Department of Transportation invites heavy equipment owners to sign up for the rental of their equipment with operators for SNOW & ICE REMOVAL purposes in Christiansburg Residency which includes the counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski during the winter of 2026-2027. Price per hour shall include operators, fuel, tire chains, supplies and required insurance. VDOT will need dump trucks, pickups with plows, motorgaders, backhoes, dozers, track loaders, tractors, rubber-tire loaders and farm tractors. All equipment shall be equipped for night work and be in good mechanical condition to ensure a safe and dependable 24/7 operation. VDOT reserves the right to determine acceptability of equipment size and condition for the task. Contractors submitting prices meeting the requirements of the Agreement may be contracted with and may be eligible to receive a bonus payment and a minimum guaranteed payment for the season. Contractors must submit their application on the electronic M7B bidding site at <https://plow4va.vdot.virginia.gov>. All new and returning Contractors must be active in the Virginia eProcurement Portal (eVA) in order to do business with the Commonwealth of Virginia (<https://eva.virginia.gov>). Applications received by 7:00 PM on Friday September 18, 2026 may be eligible for a bonus payment. See the EVA posting for additional information, including contract requirements. Questions can be directed to the Christiansburg Residency from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday –Friday. Phone: 540-381-7201
Email: SalemDistrictSnow@vdot.virginia.gov
EEO/AA Employer

Celco Partnership and its controlled affiliates doing business as Verizon Wireless (Verizon Wireless) proposes to install a public lighting structure and associated wireless communications antennas at an overall height of 41.5 feet at the approx. vicinity of 1322 South Main Street, Blacksburg, Montgomery County, VA 24060. In accordance with the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic

Legals - Montgomery County

Preservation Act and the FCC regulations implementing Section 106 review, public comments regarding potential effects from this site on historic properties may be submitted to: Trileaf Corp, Maggie Vincent, m.vincent@trileaf.com, 303 International Circle, Suite 150, Hunt Valley, MD 21030, 410-853-7128.

LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE TOWN OF CHRISTIANSBURG PLANNING COMMISSION

The Town of Christiansburg Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Monday, August 31, 2026, at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers of the Christiansburg Town Hall, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia 24073, pursuant to Sections 15.2-2204 and 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia, as amended. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comments concerning:

A. Conditional Use Permit request by The Economic Development Authority of Montgomery County, Virginia, Property Owner and Applicant, to allow a structure greater than 70 feet in height, specifically a manufacturing area with a footprint of 8,500 square feet and a height of 105 feet, in the General Industrial (I2) zoning district on property located at 2040 Parkway Drive SE, identified as Tax Parcel 558-(A)-24A (Parcel ID 300149), consisting of approximately 38.102 total acres. The property is designated as Mixed Use w/ Buffer (Industrial) on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan. Town Hall will be open and available to receive public comments in-person at the time of this Public Hearing. A copy of the application, the Town's Zoning Map, Zoning Ordinance, and Future Land Use Map may be viewed in the Planning Department Office, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, VA 24073, during normal office hours of 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Contact the Planning Department, at (540) 382-6128, ext. 1902 or by email at planning@christiansburg.org, with any questions or if you require reasonable accommodations.

LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE TOWN OF CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL

The Town of Christiansburg Town Council will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, September 8, 2026, at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers of the Christiansburg Town Hall, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia 24073. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comments concerning:

A. Code Amendment request by Town of Christiansburg, Applicant, to amend the Christiansburg Town Code, Chapter 42, Sec. 42-397 – Permitted uses. Data centers are currently allowed by right in the General Industrial (I-2) Zoning District, and the request is to require a conditional use permit for data centers in the General Industrial (I-2) Zoning District. A copy of the applications, the Town's Zoning Map, Zoning Ordinance, and Future Land Use Map may be viewed in the Planning Department Office, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, VA 24073 during normal office hours of 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Contact the Planning Department, at (540) 382-6128, ext. 1902 or by email at planning@christiansburg.org, with any questions or if you require reasonable accommodations.

TRUSTEE'S SALE OF 2676 DRY VALLEY ROAD, RADFORD, VA 24141.

In execution of a certain Deed of Trust dated June 25, 2003, in the original principal amount of \$60,900.00 recorded in the Clerk's Office, Circuit Court for Montgomery County, Virginia as Instrument No.

Legals - Montgomery County

2003010550. The undersigned Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction in the front of the Circuit Court building for the City of Radford, 619 Second St., W., Radford, VA, or any such temporary alternative Circuit Court location designated by the Judges of the Circuit Court, on September 16, 2026, at 11:00 AM, the property described in said Deed of Trust, located at the above address, and more particularly described as follows: ALL THAT UN-NUMBERED PARCEL OF LAND CONTAINING 0.731 ACRE DESIGNATED AS RETAINED BY OLLIE BAIN ON THAT CERTAIN PLAT OF SURVEY ENTITLED "PLAT FOR KYLE E. DAVIS AND SHARON B. DAVIS OF AN UN-NUMBERED 1.0005 AC. LOT NEAR BAINS CHAPEL IN RINER MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VIRGINIA", PREPARED BY NEAL H. WIRT, LAND SURVEYOR, DATED MAY 5, 1997, DESIGNATED PLAT NO. 97-505, A COPY OF WHICH PLAT IS RECORDED IN THE CIRCUIT COURT CLERK'S OFFICE IN DEED BOOK 991, PAGE 410, AND TO WHICH PLAT REFERENCED IS HEREBY MADE FOR A MORE ACCURATE DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY HEREIN CONVEYED. TERMS OF SALE: ALL CASH. A bidder's deposit of ten percent (10%) of the sale price or ten percent (10%) of the original principal balance of the subject Deed of Trust, whichever is lower, in the form of cash or certified funds payable to the Substitute Trustee must be present at the time of the sale. The balance of the purchase price will be due within fifteen (15) days of sale, otherwise Purchaser's deposit may be forfeited to Trustee. Time is of the essence. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser may, if provided by the terms of the Trustee's Memorandum of Foreclosure Sale, be entitled to a \$50 cancellation fee from the Substitute Trustee, but shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. A form copy of the Trustee's memorandum of foreclosure sale and contract to purchase real property is available for viewing at www.aldridgepите.com. Additional terms, if any, to be announced at the sale and the Purchaser may be given the option to execute the contract of sale electronically. This is a communication from a debt collector and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. The sale is subject to seller confirmation. Substitute Trustee: Equity Trustees, LLC, 8100 Three Chopt Road, Suite 240, Richmond, VA 23229. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Virginia Pre-Sale Department of counsel for Equity Trustees, LLC at 301-961-6555, website: www.aldridgepите.com. VA-384975-1.

TRUSTEE'S SALE OF 4681 FISHERSVIEW ROAD, PILOT, VA 24138.

In execution of a certain Deed of Trust dated November 22, 2013, in the original principal amount of \$196,000.00 recorded in the Clerk's Office, Circuit Court for Montgomery County, Virginia as Instrument No. 2013011218. The undersigned Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction in the front of the Circuit Court building for the City of Radford, 619 Second St., W., Radford, VA, or any such temporary alternative Circuit Court location designated by the Judges of the Circuit Court, on October 8, 2026, at 4:15 PM, the property described in said Deed of Trust, located at the above address, and more particularly described as follows: ALL THAT CERTAIN LOT OR PARCEL OF LAND, LYING AND BEING IN THE SHAWSVILLE MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VIRGINIA, LOCATED SOUTHWEST OF VIRGINIA STATE ROUTE NO. 609, MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS: BEING THAT CERTAIN PARCEL

Legals - Montgomery County

CONTAINING 11.703 ACRES IN THE AGGREGATE, AS SHOWN ON A PLAT BY L.J. QUESENBERRY, LAND SURVEYOR, DATED MARCH 30, 1978, AND REFERRED TO AS JOB NO. 115, A COPY OF WHICH IS RECORDED IN DEED BOOK 396 AT PAGE 926, IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VIRGINIA. TERMS OF SALE: ALL CASH. A bidder's deposit of ten percent (10%) of the sale price or ten percent (10%) of the original principal balance of the subject Deed of Trust, whichever is lower, in the form of cash or certified funds payable to the Substitute Trustee must be present at the time of the sale. The balance of the purchase price will be due within fifteen (15) days of sale, otherwise Purchaser's deposit may be forfeited to Trustee. Time is of the essence. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser may, if provided by the terms of the Trustee's Memorandum of Foreclosure Sale, be entitled to a \$50 cancellation fee from the Substitute Trustee, but shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. A form copy of the Trustee's memorandum of foreclosure sale and contract to purchase real property is available for viewing at www.aldridgepите.com. Additional terms, if any, to be announced at the sale and the Purchaser may be given the option to execute the contract of sale electronically. This is a communication from a debt collector and any information obtained will be used for that purpose. The sale is subject to seller confirmation. Substitute Trustee: Equity Trustees, LLC, 8100 Three Chopt Road, Suite 240, Richmond, VA 23229. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Virginia Pre-Sale Department of counsel for Equity Trustees, LLC at 301-961-6555, website: www.aldridgepите.com. VA-384975-1.

Trustee's Sale

1990 Reesedale Road, Elliston, Virginia 24087 (Parcel ID: 022175; Tax Map No.: 057- 2 6) Default having been made in the terms of a certain Deed of Trust dated December 29, 2015, in the original principal amount of \$106,837.00 and recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of the County of Montgomery, Virginia in Instrument No. 150009429, the undersigned Substitute Trustees will sell at public auction on September 25, 2026, at 3:00 PM in front of the building housing the Montgomery County Circuit Court, 55 East Main Street, Christiansburg, VA 24073, the property designated as Lot number six (6), as shown on plat entitled "Survey for [...] Kaulback" showing Subdivision of 45.86 acre tract, Mt. Tabor District, Montgomery County, Virginia, which plat is dated June 18, 1979, prepared by T.P. Parker and Son, C.L.S., designated no. 6256, and recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court in Montgomery County, Virginia, in Plat Book 9, page 197. Sale is subject to all prior liens, easements, restrictions, covenants, and conditions, if any, of record, or other matters which would be disclosed by an accurate survey or inspection of the premises. TERMS: CASH. A deposit of \$11,000.00 or 10% of the sale price, whichever is lower, will be required of the successful bidder at time of sale. Prior to the sale, interested bidders will be required to register with and must present a bid deposit which may be held during the sale by the trustee. The bid deposit must be certified funds and/or cash, but no more than \$9,900.00 of cash will be accepted. The successful bidder's deposit will be retained at the sale and applied to the sale price. If held by the trustee, all other bid deposits will be returned to the unsuccessful bidders. Settlement is to be made within 15 calendar days. The successful bidder will be responsible for obtaining possession of the property, and for all costs and fees related to recording the Trustee's

Legals - Montgomery County

Deed, including the grantors tax. The successful bidder will be required to execute a Memorandum of Trustee's Sale, available for review on the Foreclosure Sales page of www.glasserlaw.com, outlining additional terms of sale and settlement. A Trustee's Deed will be prepared by Trustee's attorney at high bidder's expense. This is a communication from a debt collector, Glasser and Glasser, P.L.C. on behalf of Atlantic Trustee Services, L.L.C., and/or M. Brennan Hutt d/b/a H&H Abstracting, and/or NFPDS-VA LLC, Substitute Trustees, Crown Center Building, Suite 600, 580 East Main Street, Norfolk, VA 23510, File No. 233457-02, Tel: (757) 321-6465, between 10:00 a.m. & 12:00 noon only.

Legals - Town of Vinton

VINTON TOWN COUNCIL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Please take notice that on Tuesday, September 1, 2026, at 6:00PM, or as soon thereafter as the matter may be heard, in the Council Chambers of the Vinton Municipal Building, 311 South Pollard Street, Vinton, Virginia, the Vinton Town Council will hold conduct a public hearing on the following: RESOLUTION NO. — A RESOLUTION PURSUANT TO VIRGINIA CODE § 15.2-202 REQUESTING THAT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AMEND THE CHARTER OF THE TOWN OF VINTON TO REMOVE AND/OR RESOLVE INCONSISTENT, OUTDATED, AND/OR UNNECESSARY LANGUAGE, TO CLARIFY LANGUAGE REGARDING THE TOWN MANAGER'S AUTHORITY, AND TO INCORPORATE OTHER LANGUAGE REQUESTED BY TOWN COUNCIL. If adopted, the proposed Resolution will permit the Vinton Town Council to request that the Virginia General Assembly approve the requested edits to the Town's Charter. A copy of the proposed Resolution may be examined either (i) at the Office of the Town Manager at 311 South Pollard Street, Vinton, Virginia 24179, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and by appointment on Friday, or (ii) on the Town's website (www.vintonva.gov). Citizens are encouraged to review the proposed Resolution, attend the public hearing, and present their views on the proposed Resolution. Citizens also may submit public comments in writing to the following email address: mklawless@vintonva.gov, by U.S. Mail to the Town Manager's Office, 311 South Pollard Street, Vinton, VA, 24179, or by hand-delivering comments to the Town Manager's Office. Comments will be distributed to members of Town Council and entered into the minutes as public records. Individuals requiring assistance to attend and participate in public hearings, or requiring additional information on the proposed Resolution, should contact the Town Manager's Office at (540) 983-0607 prior to the meeting. Megan Lawless
Town Clerk

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SERVICES

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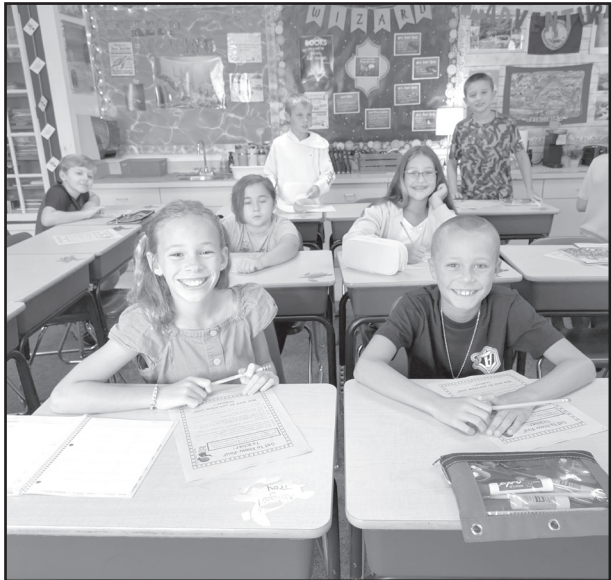
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from page 2



Student Leadership Council member Cameron Earnest helps Connor Turman get to his kindergarten class on Wednesday, the first day.

classroom. Fourth graders Abigail Browning and Carson Bryant began the year in Mrs. Martin’s class, while second graders Leila Moyers and Shylah Willis



Fourth graders Abigail Browning and Carson Bryant are excited about their first day in Mrs. Martin’s class.

started another year at Breckinridge. The first day marked the beginning of another school year for students throughout Botetourt County as the division’s 2026-27 academic year got



PHOTOS COURTESY OF MARCY WOHLFORD
Leila Moyers and Shylah Willis are proud second graders this year.

underway.

~ Fincastle Herald staff report

Letters

from page 3

letter that some alleged person (possibly anonymous?) supposedly wrote which Mr. Tyson said was given to him by “a supervisor” (anyone want to guess which one?). Is it possible that all of this is just a charade? Did Mr. Tyson prepare this alleged document and send it to “a supervisor” and then have that supervisor give it to him so he could spin this episode and attempt to gain sympathy by claiming that he is the victim when he clearly is not? Don’t forget or overlook his despicable behavior at the PC planning session on July 6 or his reprehensible shouting and screaming profanity directed at a county employee during the first recess of the Board of Supervisors (BoS) meeting on July 28. And we have this “loose cannon” sitting on a county commission? Doesn’t it appear that he may be the intimidator rather than the one being intimidated as he attempts to have us believe? Does he need an anger management course? Does he need a course on how to do the job of a planning commissioner? If the job is so tough with no pay and he doesn’t even get all of his expenses reimbursed, is there any alternative he can take?

Thankfully, there are no other representatives of our county who conduct themselves in such a shameful and

disgusting manner at public meetings. If there were, then I am sure the members of the Chronic Complainers Club (CCC) would cheer and applaud that type of conduct just as they do when Mr. Tyson has these frequent tantrums! And, to top it off, there was the ruse pulled by one who apparently signed up to speak, but did not indicate the public hearing in which she wished to be heard. When asked by the chair, she said she just wanted to congratulate the PC. When she was graciously given the opportunity to speak, the first few words she said seemed to be congratulatory, but she soon changed her tune and wanted to talk about how poorly she thought Mr. Tyson was treated at the July 6 planning session when he shouted out in a loud, angry and uncontrolled way. The chair immediately stopped her and pointed out that comments from the public at PC meetings are limited to the public hearing items. She thought she had a clever way to circumvent the rules, but, thankfully, she got caught and silenced and we didn’t have to hear the same old drivel from her that day!

I heard there was going to be a free clown show in the early evening hours at the Daleville VFW on August 13, so I went to observe. I stayed in my car and watched for about an hour. As I am not an Amsterdam District resident, I did not

go inside as some “privileged ones” did, nor did I attempt to go inside and then complain about not being allowed in because I was not an Amsterdam District resident, as did another one who thinks the rules don’t apply to her. I would like to have heard what the Google representative had to say, but from what I have heard about that event and not surprisingly, the CCC members acted just as they do at other public meetings as they do not want to hear anything which does not fit their narrative. I did notice that all the clowns did not go into the meeting because they were not Amsterdam District (or possibly not even Botetourt County) residents, just people who have nothing better to do and enjoy the company of many others who never questioned the legally advertised and conducted actions taken by the BoS in 2024, about which they now constantly whine, moan and gripe and are heard to say “We didn’t know.”

And, thankfully, I had a copy of The Fincastle Herald with me and was able to use it to keep the sun out of my eyes so I would not miss a minute of the show!

Bob Patterson
Fincastle
Buchanan District

Sunflower

from page 1

pretty.” The following year, Monaghan opened the field to the public, expecting about 300 visitors. Instead, 1,600 people attended. The festival has since grown to welcome more than 20,000 visitors annually. In 2023, the family also launched Gracely Hill, a wedding and event venue overlooking the farm. An independent economic study estimated the festival and related businesses generated \$1.4 million in local economic impact in 2023. The 2026 festival will run Sept. 11-20. The schedule includes a sunflower beer release at AFOG Brewery in Buchanan on Aug. 22 at 6 p.m., followed by the festival’s regular events in September. The 2026 festival schedule is:

- Friday, Sept. 11: 4-7 p.m.
- Saturday, Sept. 12: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Sunday, Sept. 13: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Tuesday, Sept. 15: Preschooler Field Trip, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Tuesday, Sept. 15: Ticketed Dinner, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Sept. 16: Senior Citizen Field Trip, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Wednesday, Sept. 16: Festival, 5-7:30 p.m.
- Thursday, Sept. 17: Special Abilities Field Trip, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Friday, Sept. 18: Ticketed Dinner, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- Saturday, Sept. 19: 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Sunday, Sept. 20: 10 a.m.-5

p.m. available at BeaverDamSunflowers.com. The Field of Heroes will be open whenever the festival is open. Tickets and additional information are

~ Fincastle Herald staff report



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BEAVER DAM SUNFLOWERS
Visitors browse vendor tents surrounded by sunflowers during the annual Sunflower Festival.

BCPS

from page 1

The division also wants to streamline its communication platforms so families know where to find information while continuing to communicate BCPS’ educational impact. Under “Every Student,” the new priorities include consistent division-wide communication, expanded career exploration and preparation, supportive and connected school environments, and opportunities for students to lead, collaborate, and create positive change. “Every Employee” focuses on developing a pipeline of educators

and leaders, professional development, mentoring and employee growth, and recruitment and retention. “Every Learning Environment” includes collaboration with local leaders on educational funding, a long-term plan for modern learning facilities, responsible use of emerging technology, and connections between students and families and community services. The facilities portion of the plan generated the most discussion among board members. Board member Tim Davidick said he was generally supportive of the reset but identified the funding model review and facilities modernization as two areas of concern.

Stockyard Report	
Monday’s sale at the Roanoke-Hollins Stockyard:	
69 Head	
Bottle Calves	\$650.00-\$900.00
Graded Steers	
400-499	\$391.00
600-699	\$351.00
Graded Bulls	
400-499	\$300.00-394.00
500-599	\$366.00-371.00
Graded Heifers	
300-399	\$379.00
400-499	\$350.00-358.00
500-599	\$316.00-355.00
600-699	\$300.00-322.00
Kill Cows	\$54.00-165.00
Kill Bulls	\$195.50-200.50

Davidick said both issues have been discussed for approximately 20 years and urged the division to accelerate its work. “I think it’s time to put the pedal to the metal and do something about it,” Davidick said, adding that facilities are declining faster than the division is developing plans. Chair Anna Weddle said she and board member Dana McCaleb participated in the strategic direction committee and that local leaders had been invited to participate or observe the four meetings. “No one came to any of the four meetings,” Weddle said. Davidick said the facilities issue should serve as a “call to arms” for the community and county leaders. He said he joined the School Board in part to help make the school division attractive to growth while

maintaining the county’s culture and values. “But we’re going to become... a caricature of what a disaster can look like,” Davidick said. McCaleb said the condition of the buildings does not reflect what happens inside them. “Our buildings are not a reflection of what we are as a county,” McCaleb said. Superintendent Dr. Janet Womack said the strategic planning process was positive and that the division intends to continue seeking collaboration as the initiatives move forward. “We do want our facilities to reflect the magic that happens every day and our high performance,” Womack said. Womack said BCPS is preparing for a facilities study that will be larger than any conducted by the division in more than a decade. The division

has entered into term contracts allowing it to work with a third party, and representatives from one organization have already toured both high schools and BTEC. Once the study begins, Womack said the data collection and facility review are expected to take three to four months, followed by presentations and facilitated discussions. She expects those conversations to begin by the end of the semester. Following the discussion, Weddle opened a required public hearing to allow residents to comment on the strategic direction reset. No members of the public spoke, and the hearing was closed. No action was taken on the strategic direction during the meeting. In her superintendent’s report, Womack also reported a smooth start to the 2026-27 school year. BCPS recorded 4,368 students on the first day,

August 12, and central office administrators visited all 12 school sites. Womack said the division was fully staffed in certificated positions on the first day, although classified positions remain open. She also reported continued improvement in Advanced Placement performance. The percentage of AP exams earning a qualifying score of 3 or higher increased from 73% in 2022 to 87% in 2026. The board also received an update from Becky Stackhouse, branch executive director of the Botetourt Family YMCA, on programs provided in partnership with BCPS, including after-school programming, camps, water-safety instruction, and other student programs. The YMCA’s presentation fit within the strategic direction’s emphasis on connecting students and families with community services. Last year, 128 students participated in Y After School, while 59 participated in all-day care, 62 in winter camp and 32 in spring camp. To watch the August meeting in its entirety, visit bcps.live/archives. To review the “reset” of BCPS’s strategic plan, go to https://sites.google.com/bcps.k12.va.us/strategicdirection/home.

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GHEG	CARAT	BARI	LENO	IRATE	IBIS	IDES	DELED	NECK						

PUBLIC NOTICE

The next regular meeting of the Botetourt County Board of Supervisors will be held on Tuesday, August 25, 2026, beginning at 2:00 p.m. at the Botetourt County Administration Center at 57 South Center Drive in Daleville, Virginia.

For information regarding this meeting, please see www.botetourtva.gov or contact the County Administrator’s Office at 540-928-2006.

Top three James River golfers off to a great start

The James River golfers are in Giles County today to participate in a “Throwback” match with some of the Knights’ former district rivals. The match will be held at the Castle Rock Golf Club with a 1 p.m. tee off time.

This will be the Knights’ fourth match in the span of nine days. The busy stretch began last Tuesday at the Hobbs Hole course in Tappahannock against Rappahannock High School. The team shot a collective 324 with Mason Gilliland leading the charge with a 72. Landon Bolling was close behind with a 75 and Braden Persinger shot an 82.

Last Thursday, August 13, the Knights hosted a match at the Botetourt Golf & Swim Club. It was a tight match with Radford leading the way at 308. Floyd County was two strokes back at 310 and James River wasn’t far behind at 318. River seniors Bolling

and Gilliland both shot two over par 73 and sophomore Persinger shot four over par 75.

“Our top three golfers are having a great year,” said River coach Donna Cox. “We are continuing to work hard at getting a solid fourth score.”

The Knights were back on the links on Monday of this week as they traveled to White Sulphur Springs for a round at the challenging Greenbriar Course. Once again the team was led by Bolling, who scorched the course with a five under par 69 under wet conditions. Gilliland was also impressive on the difficult course, shooting even par 74, and Persinger had a solid third score with an 81.

After today’s match the Knights will take a break, returning to action Thursday, August 27, with match at the Hanging Rock Country Club in Roanoke County.

Lord Botetourt golfers play at Ashley Plantation next week

The Blue Ridge District golfers played a round at the Mariners Landing Country Club on the shores of Smith Mountain Lake last Thursday. Northside had the low score with a nine-hole 158 and Lord Botetourt was second at 161.

Jackson Taylor and Jonah Dunker tied for the low score for LB with

39 each. That was four strokes behind Northside’s Ryland Stump, who took medalist honors with a 35. Also scoring for LB were Cole Cecil at 41 and Derek Bond at 42.

Lord Botetourt’s team score of 161 was one stroke better than third place Franklin County at 162. William Byrd shot 173 and Staunton River had a 181. William

Fleming had just two players on the course.

The Cavaliers were scheduled to host a district match at the Botetourt Golf & Swim Club on Tuesday of this week but results were too late for publication. The Cavs will be back in action next Tuesday, August 25, with a match at the Ashley Plantation beginning at 1 p.m.

Volleyball season begins next week

The Virginia High School League volleyball season officially begins next week with the first games scheduled for Monday. James River and Lord Botetourt teams will open their seasons on Tuesday, August 25, both at home.

Fincastle

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while general fund revenues totaled approximately \$348,000. Stone said the water and sewer fund has experienced “slow but steady” growth, with net position increasing from about \$700,000 in 2021 to approximately \$1.069 million in 2025.

The town’s asset-to-liability ratio was 5.4, which Stone described as strong.

“We like what we’re seeing,” Stone said, while noting that inflation has begun causing financial difficulties for some localities. He had not yet reviewed Fincastle’s 2026 financial numbers.

Mayor Smith asked whether the COVID-19 relief funds the town received contributed to some of the growth shown in the audit materials. Stone said the funding accounted for a significant portion of the increase, as the town used the money for projects including electronic water meters and infiltration and inflow studies rather than its own funds.

Smith said the town has intentionally built financial reserves because of the age of its wastewater infrastructure.

“We have tried to build up a nest egg because we know that if something happens with our wastewater, that it’s going to be expensive,” Smith said.

Stone recommended that the town consider developing a longer-term capital improvements plan for its water and sewer system. Smith said the town has tried to maintain a three- to five-year outlook but acknowledged that major infrastructure needs are difficult to predict.

Council member Jim Reynolds asked whether the town would have to repay any of its COVID-19 funding. Smith said it would not, provided the money is spent on eligible infrastructure projects by the required deadline. The town is on track to spend the funds by the end of the year.

Following the audit presentation, council approved its August bills and reviewed the July treasurer’s reports.

The council then approved using up to \$50,000 in remaining COVID-19 relief funds toward a backup generator for the town’s main water well.

Town Manager Melanie McFadyen said the town had obtained quotes for a diesel-powered generator equipped with an automatic transfer switch, allowing it to activate automatically without someone having to travel to the well.

Under current conditions, McFadyen said the town

could reach a boiled-water situation after approximately eight to 10 hours without power at the well. Another eight to 10 hours without a generator could result in portions of town running out of water. The proposed generator would provide approximately another 24 hours of capacity.

The generator meets a preferred FEMA standard and could eventually be moved to the town’s other well site if necessary.

McFadyen said the town’s electronic water meters came in approximately \$40,000 to \$45,000 under budget. The town determined the remaining COVID funds could be redirected toward the generator because the money would still be used for eligible water and wastewater infrastructure.

Council approved the motion. McFadyen said the town also has a grant application pending that could provide funding for an additional backup generator.

The council also received an update on sidewalks following a meeting with the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Three primary locations were discussed: the sidewalk on Church Street between Back and Main streets, the sidewalk on Murray Street between Church and Roanoke streets, and

the sidewalk in front of the probation office. The town also asked VDOT to examine an uneven sidewalk in front of the Botetourt Chamber of Commerce and deteriorating brick sidewalks.

McFadyen said VDOT representatives received photographs and visited the locations. Smith said she was optimistic the agency would address at least some of the problems.

The town also discussed a recent incident involving an 18-wheeler at Main and Hancock streets. The truck reportedly struck signs, damaged the sidewalk and had difficulty making the turn before leaving the area. Smith said the town has a photograph of the truck’s tags and plans to contact the Botetourt County Sheriff’s Office.

The incident renewed discussion about establishing a truck route through Fincastle, which town officials said would require action by the county.

Smith said Fincastle streets are expected to be paved before October, with streets immediately surrounding the courthouse construction to be paved next year after the project is complete.

The town also plans to pursue digital speed-limit signs that flash when vehicles exceed the posted speed.



PHOTO BY MATT DE SIMONE

The newly renovated gazebo at Big Spring Park is shown following recent improvements.

At Big Spring Park, council members praised the nearly completed gazebo project and work on the park’s monument. The stonework on the monument was completed by Bert Perkey at Cornerstone Masonry and gazebo work was done by Blue Mountain Construction’s Jacob Martin. The fence is nearly finished, with gates still to be completed, and the town is considering replacing boards on the bridge.

The town also plans to apply for a \$50,000 non-matching, reimbursable Virginia Department of Forestry grant to remove invasive plants from the park.

If awarded, a second phase would focus on replacing some of the vegetation with native hardwood trees.

McFadyen also reported on maintenance work completed at the town office by Dennis Webb, including work on locks, doors, blinds, gutters and landscaping.

The town is continuing work on an update to its comprehensive plan. McFadyen said surveys will soon be mailed to Fincastle addresses, with additional copies available at the library.

The council’s next meeting is scheduled for Sept. 10 at 7 p.m. at the Fincastle Volunteer Fire Department.

Town Hall

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Among the most significant topics was the project’s potential water use.

Google representatives said the current agreement with the Western Virginia Water Authority reserves capacity for up to 2 million gallons of water per day. They emphasized that the figure represents a maximum capacity reservation and does not necessarily reflect the project’s expected average daily consumption.

Representatives said Google would purchase potable water from the Water Authority and would be subject to the same drought-related curtailments as other customers.

Residents questioned whether the project would receive preferential treatment from the Water Authority. Google representatives said the company is a customer like other businesses and is not treated differently because it is a data center. Residents disputed that characterization, according to the county’s Q&A.

Google said it has investigated water-reuse systems for the project but determined that a reuse system was not feasible under the circumstances presented by the local water system. Representatives said the company is evaluating potential water-replenishment projects within the applicable watershed, but no specific project had been selected.

Representatives did not provide a specific contingency plan for what would happen if Google could not identify an acceptable replenishment project. The company also did not provide a specific Carvins Cove reservoir level at which the project would no longer receive water, saying that determination would be made by the Water Authority.

Google representatives said the project remains in an early stage, with site work anticipated during the third quarter of 2026, subject to required local permits. Vertical construction is anticipated to begin in 2027.

The county has approved site plans for limited mass grading, while the project continues to work through land-disturbance permitting needed for broader site work.

The project also has not received approval from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, according to the Q&A. Representatives said environmental permitting involving the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and the Army Corps remains underway, including reviews involving potential impacts to wetlands and streams.

Google representatives said wetlands and streams were identified during the project’s initial due diligence and that any impacts would be subject to state and federal permitting requirements.

Residents also asked about a portion of the Greenfield property that was clear-cut before the project was publicly announced. Representatives said the county had issued a timber permit while it owned the property but did not provide the exact date of the permit. Follow-up information was promised.

The question of whether the clear-cutting required a land-disturbance permit was not definitively answered.

The first planned data center building is now expected to use air cooling rather than water cooling. Google representatives said the change was made primarily because of project timing and would allow

the first building to proceed more quickly without the same water-cooling infrastructure. They acknowledged that air cooling is more expensive and requires more electricity for cooling.

The cooling method for the other two planned buildings has not been finalized. Representatives said water cooling remains under consideration for those facilities.

Google representatives also acknowledged that air cooling could produce more noise. The company said it has an internal standard calling for sound levels at the property boundary of approximately 55 decibels.

Planned noise mitigation includes equipment enclosures, sound monitoring, vegetation, setbacks and site and building design. Representatives did not provide a detailed plan for where noise-monitoring equipment would be placed. They also did not have exact specifications for generator mufflers and promised follow-up information.

The project is expected to use diesel generators as backup power. Google representatives acknowledged that the generators produce emissions and said they will be regulated by the Virginia DEQ.

Representatives said the generators are not intended to operate continuously under normal conditions and that Google can shift computing workloads to other facilities during periods of high electrical demand.

Residents also questioned how construction could affect neighboring wells and historic properties.

The representatives said geotechnical studies are being conducted to evaluate groundwater conditions and identify wells

on adjacent properties. They said the goal is to understand existing conditions and prevent construction from adversely affecting neighboring wells.

Google did not provide a specific contractual guarantee to repair a neighboring well if construction were determined to have caused damage. Residents also requested baseline testing of neighboring wells before construction, but representatives did not provide a definitive commitment to conduct independent baseline testing.

Blasting could be required during construction, although Google representatives said geotechnical studies were still underway to determine the amount of rock present and whether blasting would be necessary. Representatives said any blasting would be subject to regulatory requirements, advance notification and geotechnical studies.

The project also remains subject to environmental reviews concerning wetlands, streams and threatened and endangered species. Representatives defended the tricolored bat as an endangered species relevant to the area but said it had not been identified on the portion of the site being developed.

They said the project remains planned for three data center buildings along with an office-type building described as a university or hub facility. They said the site is effectively capped at the planned number of data center buildings.

They also said the facility is a private Google Data Center and is not being developed for the federal government or military.

Google identified employment, economic development, tax revenue and infrastructure investment

among the potential benefits of the project, but representatives did not provide a specific number of permanent or construction jobs during the meeting.

On utility rates, representatives said infrastructure investment associated with the project could prevent some costs from being passed on to utility ratepayers. They did not guarantee that Botetourt County residents would see lower utility bills as a direct result of the project.

Residents also asked about potential health effects, electromagnetic fields and property values. The Q&A notes that no site-specific long-term health study concerning electromagnetic exposure was identified during the meeting. The representatives also did not present an independent study establishing how the project would affect surrounding property values.

Several other questions remain open, including whether Google would have a contractual obligation to restore the property if the data center were abandoned.

Google representatives offered to provide additional information on topics including water use, water replenishment, wastewater chemistry, timber permits, generator specifications and environmental studies.

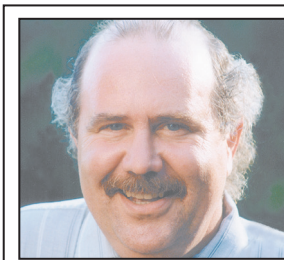
The Southwest Virginia Data Center Transparency Alliance (SWVA DCTA) criticized the meeting’s limited attendance, calling it a “private town hall,” and saying residents challenged Google’s responses. The group also criticized the exclusion of media and characterized the meeting as lacking transparency.

The county’s Q&A is available at <https://www.botetourtva.gov/1071/Google-QA>.

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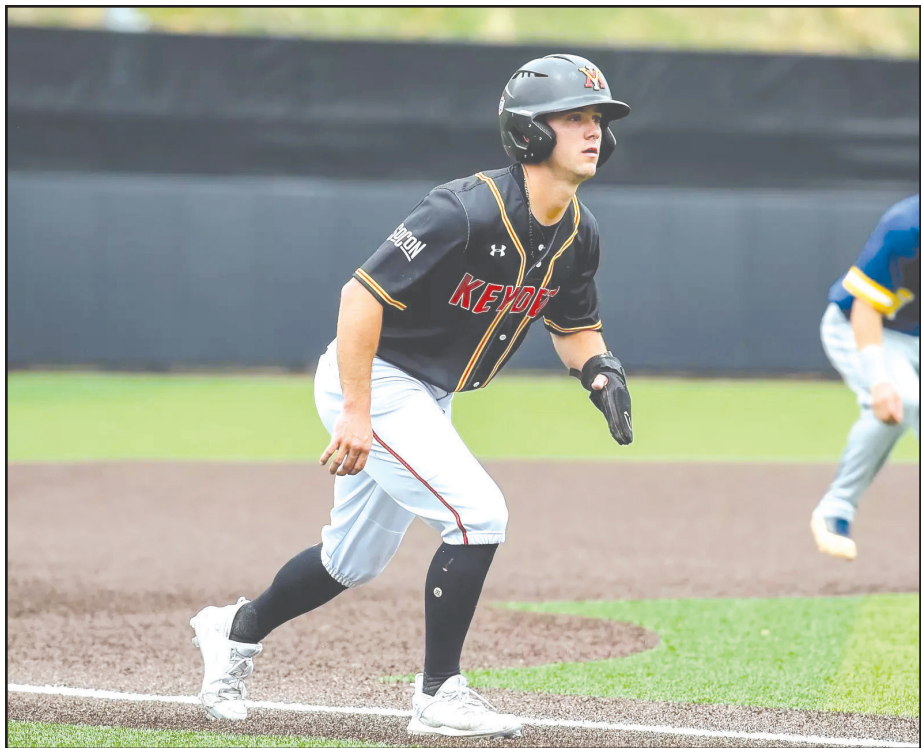
Sports

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Brian Hoffman

Sports Editor



VMI PHOTO

Owen Prince, a graduate of Lord Botetourt High School, has signed with the Pittsburgh Pirates after playing at VMI.

Prince signs contract with Pittsburgh Pirates

Owen Prince, a Lord Botetourt High School graduate who played baseball at Virginia Military Institute, has signed a contract to play in the Major League Baseball Pittsburgh Pirates organization. Owen is currently in Bradenton, Fla., at the Pirates' spring training facility and will be playing in some controlled games for a few weeks hoping to get moved to their low A team, which is also in Bradenton.

Owen, who played for LB with his twin brother Nate, hit .403 as a Cavalier senior in the spring of 2022. He was a catcher for Lord Botetourt and split time between catcher and the outfield at VMI as a freshman and sophomore. He was strictly a centerfielder as a junior in 2025 and was third nationally with 46 stolen bases.

This past spring, as a senior, Owen

was named to the Preseason All-SoCon second-team as an outfielder, collected SoCon All-Defensive Team honors and led the conference with 29 stolen bases to rank in the top 10 in program history. He scored a team-high 62 runs to rank in the top 10 in single-season history, reached base safely a record-tying 43 straight games and led the team with three triples. Owen had 19 multi-hit games while slashing .307/.371/.444 with 63 hits.

For his four-year career Prince ranks first in program history with 103 stolen bases, second with a .457 on-base clip, fourth with 173 runs and 132 walks, and 10th with 34 hit by pitches.

Owen is the son of former LB baseball standout Bobby Prince and wife Karen. His brother Nate played baseball for Roanoke College.

Underwood is new athletic director at Lord Botetourt High School

Lord Botetourt High School has a new athletic director, and just in time. Candace Underwood was approved for the position last week with school already in session.

Underwood didn't have to go far to move her stuff. She's been a Health and Physical Education teacher in the county for 26 years and has moved her office from the LB gym to the AD digs high above the high school basketball court.

"I'm so very excited to be the new athletic director for Lord Botetourt," she said. "I consider it such a privilege to be chosen to lead a school with such a strong tradition of success."

Underwood has a solid background in high school athletics. A 1994 graduate of Glenvar High School, she was a member of the volleyball, softball and cheer teams for the Highlanders. She then studied at Virginia Tech and graduated in 1998.

Candace came to Lord Botetourt High School in 2001. She coached JV volleyball for the first three years then moved into the varsity head coaching job until 2008 when she stepped away to spend more time with her young children. In more recent years she has been serving the past two seasons as the assistant coach on the Unified Track team. As AD, she will no longer be a teacher.

"It was bittersweet for me, after having spent the past 26 years teaching to leave



LBHS PHOTO

Candace Underwood is the new athletic director at Lord Botetourt High School.

the classroom," she said. "But I'm excited to begin a new chapter working with student athletes in a new capacity."

Underwood replaces Tim Fulton, who resigned to take a similar position at Smith Mountain Lake Christian Academy. Fulton left the position in mid-July after four years on the job. Fulton replaced popular AD Chuck Pound, who retired following the 2021-22 school year. Pound made the transition easy for Fulton, and Tim hoped to do the same for his successor despite the timing of the move. Candace was planning for the school athletic year even before she was officially confirmed.

"It is certainly a busy time of year right now with

all of the fall sports starting up the week I began, but Mr. Fulton left things ready to go for me to just jump right in and hit the ground running," she said. "I spent the past two years serving as his assistant so that really helped prepare me for the job ahead. I'm also very thankful to have amazing people supporting me in the building. My administration, bookkeepers, coaches and co-workers have been so helpful. We truly have a great team and that makes the job even better."

"I am looking forward to seeing all the exciting accomplishments this upcoming school year will bring for our student athletes, coaches, school and community."



The Lord Botetourt football team had an inter-squad scrimmage last Friday night in Daleville while the James River team scrimmaged Craig County and Rockbridge County in Springwood.

Cavaliers open the season for real this Saturday at Emory & Henry

The high school football season is officially here, at least for Lord Botetourt. The Cavaliers will play their first varsity game of the season this Saturday when LB plays Rye Cove at Emory & Henry's Fred Selfe Stadium. Kick-off is set for 7 p.m.

The LB-Rye Cove game is not just the only game in town, it's one of just five games in Virginia to open the season on the "zero week." The other games in the state this weekend find Richlands at Virginia High, Rappahannock County at Greenbrier Christian, Twin Springs hosting Providence Academy of Tennessee, and Holston at the new Southern Gap High, which has combined Grundy, Hurley, Council, and Twin Valley student bodies. All except the Botetourt game will be played on Friday night.

Lord Botetourt will be the official "home" team for this game but it's no place like home. The same two played on the zero date last year and LB won 49-12. Rye Cove is a Class 1 school in the Region 1D Cumberland District. After losing to LB in the opener last year the Eagles won 11 of their next 14 games and advanced to the VHSL Class 1 championship at Salem Stadium, losing to Rappahannock in the championship game, 49-14.

Friday will be the Lord Botetourt High head coaching debut for Nick Leftwich, who replaces Jamie Harless after 14 straight winning seasons.

Harless departed to take the head coaching job at Union High School in Big Stone Gap, not far from where he grew up.

"I haven't seen them on film yet, but I know they have some size," Leftwich said of Rye Cove last weekend. "They're a deep southwest team so you know they're going to play smash-mouth football. They run a double wing and wing-T and spread it out a little."

As far as playing at Emory & Henry, Leftwich has some history there. He was on the team at UVA-Wise when the team played there and he was also at Emory for a team camp when Nick was an assistant coach at Graham High School.

"It's not Division I, but it's a nice stadium," said Leftwich.

As far as playing on the zero date, Nick isn't crazy about it but he's adapted. He's changed the offensive scheme from what Harless ran and has had one less week to do so.

"We need to be dialed in early," he said. "For most people this week is their second scrimmage so we've had to get ready a little quicker. We've figured out the bread and butter but we'll still need to add the side dishes later on."

This is the second year of the two-year schedule, and LB won't be playing on the zero date when the new schedule comes out in 2027. Next year they'll open with Amherst County on the traditional week one.

Knights will host football scrimmage with Nelson County Friday

The James River football team will host Nelson County in the final scrimmage of the preseason for both teams this Friday night. The scrimmage is scheduled for 6 p.m. in Springwood and there is no charge.

River coach Jack Baker is quite familiar with the Nelson program. He was the head coach there for three years before returning to his alma mater, James River High School, for the 2025 season. Both teams were 5-5 and made the playoffs last year, but that won't be a factor Friday as both Baker and Governors' coach Ben Butler will be sizing up their troops for when the real games begin on August 28.

The Knights were also home last Friday, scrimmaging Craig County and Rockbridge County. Craig runs a single wing offense, something River probably won't see in any regular season game this year. However, Baker feels it's still a great benefit to his team as the Rockets

are physical and expecting to have a big season.

"It was very worthwhile," he said. "They make you play football on the line of scrimmage, and that's very important. I thought we competed very well."

After Friday's scrimmage the Knights will open the regular season with two more home games, on August 28 with Auburn and September 4 with Blacksburg. They won't play a scrimmage or game on the road until they head to Buena Vista on September 11 to play Parry McCluer.



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